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PERFORMANCE GUIDE FOR CHARLES T. GRIFFES'
POEM FOR FLUTE AND PIANO

By

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Elizabeth D. Heikkila
29 May 2013

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Love you.

Performance Guide for Charles T. Griffes'

Poem for Flute and Piano

American composer, Charles Tomlinson Griffes (1884-1920), is known for his experimental and innovative musical compositional techniques. While not as well-known as other American composers, his music continues to be played today.

Griffes' total output consisted of 140 pieces composed within approximately 13 years (Anderson, 1993). A partial list of his compositions includes the following: 6 stage pieces, 9 orchestral pieces, 3 chamber sets (including 2 arrangements of *Three Tone-Pictures*, op. 5), 5 individual chamber works, 14 vocal song sets, 16 individual vocal songs, 10 piano sets, 18 individual piano works, 2 two-piano pieces, 4 choral works, and 1 piece for organ (Anderson, 1993). His early musical style can be characterized as his Germanic period. In his second period he composed pieces in an Impressionist style. In his third period his music was experimental and bordered on atonality (Mancinelli, 1985; Sadie & Tyrrell, 2002). Throughout his career Griffes was fascinated with Oriental music, an influence that was apparent in compositions such as *The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan* and to some degree, *Poem for Flute and Orchestra* (Ewen, 1969).

Poem for Flute and Piano, composed while Griffes was in his early thirties, was one of the last pieces he finished. The orchestral version of the piece premiered in 1919 with Georges Barrère as the solo flutist. *Poem*, a blend of Impressionism and "quasi-

Orientalism" has become a standard in the flute repertoire (Clarke, 1977, p. 100). Flutists, such as Nancy Toff, regard *Poem for Flute and Piano* as being "'professional' quality literature . . . suitable for public performance," (Toff, 1996, p. 285). Further indication of its level of difficulty is that *Poem* appears in the National Flute Association's *Selected Flute Repertoire: A Graded Guide for Teachers and Students* (2004) as a level J piece (on a scale of A though J, J being the most difficult).

Poem is a challenging piece, both technically and musically. The technical demands make defining phrases and the pacing of *rubato* difficult. Extremes of register and dynamics create problems with tone quality and intonation. In addition to a discussion of performance difficulties, a brief biography of the composer, as well as a history and analysis of *Poem*, will be provided in this document. Such background information is necessary for the formulation of an appropriate musical interpretation (Gearheart, 2011).

Biography

Born in Elmira, New York on September 17, 1884, Charles Griffes was the third oldest of five children. Griffes always had a natural interest in other art forms, not just music (Bauer, 1943). He enjoyed reading, drawing, watercolor painting, etching on copper, and poetry.

Music was important in the Griffes family (Bauer, 1943). Griffes' first instructor was his older sister, Katharine, who played violin and piano. She taught him piano for four years beginning at the age of 11 (Boda, 1962). Once Griffes surpassed her knowledge and skills he became the pupil of Mary Selena Broughton, Professor of Piano at Elmira College (Markow, 1984). Broughton had also been his sister's piano teacher (Bauer, 1943).

Broughton appears to have been important in shaping Griffes's career (Anderson, 1993; Bauer, 1943; Boda, 1962; Maisel, 1984). She not only provided Griffes with piano lessons, but also lessons in grammar and etiquette, along with the financial support necessary to study abroad (Markow, 1984). Griffes greatly respected Broughton and dedicated *Six Variations in B-flat Major* (1898) and *Four Preludes* (1899-1890), his first compositions, to her (Anderson, 1993).

When Griffes was 18 he traveled to Germany to study music as per Broughton's advice. She felt it necessary for Griffes to study in Berlin because it was a center for music study. His parents initially encouraged him to choose a more lucrative profession and keep music as an avocation, but after Broughton offered to support him financially they agreed to allow him to study in Europe (Anderson, 1993; Boda, 1962; Griffes, Bryn-Julson, Ozawa, Milnes, Spong, Stapp, & Richardson, 1976).

Broughton joined Griffes in Europe to help him find a competent teacher to launch his career as a concert pianist (Bauer, 1943). He first enrolled and was accepted

at the *Stern'sches Konservatorium*. His teachers were Ernst Jedliczka, pianist and former pupil of Nicholas Rubenstein and Tchaikovsky (Boda, 1962), as well as Rüfer, composition instructor. After Jedliczka died in 1904, Gottfried Galston became Griffes's piano instructor (Bauer, 1943).

It did not take Griffes long to realize the many challenges of being a concert pianist. He was only 19 years old at the time and was lacking in public performance experience. In addition, the sheer number of pianists in Berlin at the time made the field highly competitive. Griffes expressed his thoughts in a letter to his mother on September 9, 1903 (original letter in the New York Public Library). "It is rather discouraging at first to find so many pupils in the Conservatory who can play just as well and lots better than you can," (as cited in Griffes et al., 1976, p. 2). In another letter dated June 13, 1905 (original letter in the New York Public Library), Griffes indicated that he was proud to be invited to perform in one of the final concerts of the season in his first year as a student .

I have been so excited since yesterday that I don't know what to do, for I just learned yesterday A.M. that I am to play . . . at one of the closing concerts of the Conservatory . . . I should feel very much flattered for . . . one must be generally especially talented to play the first year. (as cited in Griffes et al., 1976, p. 3)

During Griffes' time at the *Stern'sches Konservatorium* he met Emil Joel, a civil engineering student. Griffes became close friends with Emil and valued his advice greatly; it has even been proposed that their friendship developed into a deeper

relationship (Anderson, 1993). Even though Emil was not a professionally trained musician, Griffes often sought his advice concerning musical issues (Griffes et al., 1976). One such matter Griffes discussed with Emil concerned his career track as a concert pianist. Although Griffes had had some success as a concert pianist, he began to contemplate leaving the conservatory due to his growing interest in composition and fears of becoming a piano teacher rather than a performer (Anderson, 1993). Griffes voiced his worries many times in conversations with Emil and later in a letter to his mother on February 12, 1905.

... I don't want to become merely a piano teacher. And I feel sure that I shall never become a great concert player and virtuoso, for I realize now that to be such one has to begin much earlier than I did and has to devote much more time to it than I ever did at home. So I want to become an all-around musician who can do something else beside[s] teach and play the piano. (Griffes, C. T., 1905, Griffes to C. Griffes, February 12, 1905)

Griffes felt he might learn more in a private lesson setting than as a regular conservatory student. Therefore, in 1905 he chose not to return to the *Stern'sches Konservatorium* (Sadie & Tyrrell, 2002). Although Griffes left the Conservatory, he did remain one of Galston's private students, which he explained in a letter to his mother dated September 4, 1905 (original letter in the New York Public Library).

We [Charles and Emil] have finally decided that I might as well stay with Galston, so I shall do that, but with private lessons. Miss Broughton seems to think it better to be in the Conservatory, but I feel that I have had enough of the Conservatory. I think you get twice as much from private lessons and you don't

miss lessons all the time which you have paid for (as cited in Anderson, 1993, p. 76)

After choosing to study piano and composition privately Griffes approached Engelbert Humperdinck, a Wagner protégé (Eggers, 1982), about composition lessons. Humperdinck was a highly respected German composer who only accepted new students if they had excellent recommendations (Maisel, 1984). Griffes was able to arrange two meetings with Humperdinck in which he shared his compositions. After the second meeting Griffes was accepted (Maisel, 1984). Unfortunately, Griffes ultimately received fewer than a dozen lessons because Humperdinck was working on his latest opera, *Königskinder*, and did not have the time to teach (Eggers, 1982).

Griffes continued to study piano privately with Gottfried Galston, but chose not to locate another composition instructor due to monetary issues (Anderson, 1993). Griffes explained the situation to his family in a letter on November 25, 1906 (original letter in the New York Public Library).

I don't think I have written you yet that I finally had an answer from Humperdinck that he was extremely busy now and didn't feel able to spare me the time for lessons I haven't gone to anyone else yet and don't know exactly who would be best I think I might work for a while alone, and at present I am doing that of course. All the good teachers are so busy and also expensive. (as cited in Maisel, 1984, p. 84)

In 1907, after having to discontinue lessons with Humperdinck, Griffes moved back to the United States. His reasons for returning to America are somewhat unclear.

Perhaps it was due to a lack of funds (Boda, 1969), however, some letters Griffes wrote to his mother indicate otherwise. Because his father had passed away two years previously, Griffes may have felt it his responsibility to help care for his family (Markow, 1984). Upon his return to the United States, he contacted an employment agency for assistance in locating a suitable position (Anderson, 1993). After being rejected for employment at the Wichita College of Music in Witchita, KS as their new head piano teacher he applied to and was hired at The Hackley School in Tarrytown, New York. However, due to the variability of enrollment and the lack of student enthusiasm, Griffes became discouraged and bored with the job (Lewin, 1997; Markow, 1984). In addition, the position required him to attend chapel and assemblies as the musical accompanist, a task that irritated Griffes (Clarke, 1977).

Griffes' Music

Griffes' job as a teacher gave him little satisfaction. One reason was that it took time away from his musical activity. Even so he did continue to compose. He published his first work in 1909, *Five German Poems for Solo Voice with Piano Accompaniment* (Upton, 1923). Griffes had composed several works before 1909, however, many have not been preserved because they were assignments used as a means to improve his compositional skills (Bauer, 1943).

Griffes composed his early works in a distinctly German style. This was probably due to his German education and his familiarity with the music of his contemporaries (Eggers, 1982; Lewin, 1997). His "Germanic period" began in 1903 and ended in approximately 1911, four years after his return to the United States (Boda, 1962). Pieces Griffes composed during his Germanic period include 26 pieces for piano and voice, *Sonata in F-minor* for piano (1904) and two large-scale, unpublished one-movement orchestral works [*Overture* (1905), and *Symphonische Phantasie* (1907)] (Anderson, 1993; Maisel, 1984). Anderson suggested that since Griffes had initially received his formal education in Germany, he naturally composed in the German tradition. Nevertheless, German Romanticism was not Griffes' enduring mode of artistic expression. He may have just composed in that style in order to learn the rules of composition (Anderson, 1993).

His second stylistic period has generally been characterized as Impressionist (Anderson, 1993; Boda, 1969; Clarke, 1977; Mancinelli, 1985). Several theories have been offered as to why Griffes changed his compositional style. The first theory posits that it was his neighbor, the pianist Rudolph Ganz, who exposed Griffes to Impressionist music. When Griffes was living in Berlin he heard Ganz play an Impressionist piece, which may have been either Ravel's *Jeux d'eau* (Bauer, 1943; Clarke, 1977) or a Debussy piece (Boda, 1969). Griffes immediately became interested and asked Ganz the title of the composition. After learning that it had been written by Ravel, Griffes proceeded to

find all available music by Ravel, Debussy, and other Impressionist composers (Bauer, 1943; Boda, 1969).

Griffes' musical style changed over the course of his career. In 1911 he abandoned his Germanic style music in favor of an Impressionist, experimental style. Consequently, many of his pieces between 1911 and 1917 clearly exhibit an Impressionist style. Some identifiable stylistic changes in his second period include the use of parallelism, whole-tone scales, shifting tonal centers, irregular meters, ostinatos, fugues, exotic scales, vagueness in melodic and harmonic progressions, avoidance of clear classical phrase, avoidance of positive cadences, and use of free forms (Anderson, 1993; Boda, 1962).

During Griffes' second compositional period his interest in Oriental culture became apparent in his music. Oriental devices he employed include the use of pentatonic and hexatonic scales as well as his predominantly Oriental-style instrumentation (i.e., flute, clarinet, oboe, harp, and muted strings) (Bauer, 1943). Griffes may have used these instrumental choices to suggest traditional Japanese instruments. A few of the compositions Griffes created during this time period include: *The Pleasure-Dome of Kubla Khan*, *Roman Sketches* (*The White Peacock*, *Nightfall*, *The Fountain of Acqua Paola*, and *Clouds*), and *The Night Winds* (Anderson, 1993; Boda, 1962; Griffes et al., 1976, Maisel, 1984).

Although Griffes had incorporated exotic Oriental scales into his compositions, he later expressed concern that he would be stereotyped as an Oriental composer (Bauer, 1943). It is possibly due to fears of being perceived as an Orientalist that inspired him to alter his compositional style beginning around 1917. Despite this attempt to change his writing style, some earlier Impressionist and exotic harmonic progressions can still be found in later compositions, such as *Poem for Flute and Orchestra*.

Griffes' compositions from his third stylistic period, those composed after 1917, exhibit a more modern sound. Mancinelli called this phase in Griffes' life his "compositional maturity" (Mancinelli, 1985, p. 13). During this period, he began to abandon Impressionism in favor of eclecticism (Maisel, 1984). Some compositional devices Griffes used during these years were diminished and augmented triads (a Scriabin favorite) (Randel, 1996), augmented seconds, artificial scales, *ostinatos*, the "Griffes chord" (a French sixth plus a major or minor third above) (Boda, 1962), triplet figures, extreme horizontalism (chord planing), and sonata form. Griffes also replaced chords with moving lines, created independent chordal lines between treble and bass voices, and used a choral speech-song in which rhythm and inflections are noted but specific pitches are not used (Maisel, 1984).

Griffes also began to compose absolute music. The composition of absolute music was a new endeavor for him, as his previous compositions had been inspired by

the use of poetry and other visual stimuli such as a white peacock or the color yellow (Anderson, 1993). One of his absolute music compositions is the piano *Sonata* (1917-1918) (Fabbro, 2001). Other pieces composed during this period include the following: *Three Poems by Fiona Macleod* (1918), *Two Sketches for String Quartet Based on Indian Themes* (1918), *Poem for Flute and Orchestra* (1919), *Three Preludes* (1919), and *Salut au Monde*, which was completed by Edmond Rickett after Griffes died (1919).

By the end of his life Griffes had received significant recognition. The following was stated by Richard Alderich in the New York Times on April 18, 1920 concerning the death of Charles Griffes.

Charles Tomlinson Griffes died a few days ago just as he was gaining a position as one of the most gifted of the younger American composers. The loss is great . . . We speak with pity or scorn of a public that could let a Mozart or a Schubert die and think those bad old days are gone, but from time to time something uncomfortably like them . . . is revealed in the present. (Alderich, 1920)

Background Information Relating to *Poem for Flute and Orchestra/Piano*

Poem for Flute and Orchestra was composed by Griffes in response to a request by the French-American flutist Georges Barrère in 1919. Barrère, one of Griffes' close friends, wanted a flute piece to perform in the following year's concerts.

Written during Griffes' third compositional period, *Poem* contains harmonies that are a little more functional in nature than the pieces he created during his Impressionist period. Compositional elements employed by Griffes in this piece include a quasi-

sonata-rondo form, exoticism, augmented seconds, triplet figures, ostinatos, pedal points, artificial scales, and horizontalism. Examples of such compositional techniques will be provided in the analysis section.

Griffes' could not afford to hire a professional copyist for the final drafts of *Poem* (Ewen, 1969). Therefore, during the summer of 1919 he became exhausted from trying to finish copying the orchestral manuscripts, teaching, and composing. According to scholars, the strain of overwork combined with his health problems caused Griffes to succumb to the influenza from which he never fully recovered (Anderson, 1993; Bauer, 1943; Boda 1962; Ewen, 1969; Lawrence, 1936; Mishkin, 1920).

Despite his failing health, Griffes was able to finish *Poem* in time for its premiere on November 16, 1919. The premiere of the orchestral version of the piece took place at New York's Aeolian Hall. Barrère, the flute soloist, was accompanied by the New York Philharmonic. The piece was very well received. As cited in Anderson (1993, p. 154), Harvard-trained music critic Richard Alderich wrote in the *New York Herald* (November 17, 1919) that "This *Poem* is a composition of real charm and individuality, written, in a truly idiomatic utterance, for the flute"

After its debut the publisher (Schirmer) requested a piano version of the composition (Priore, 1996). Griffes, however, due to his poor health was not able to make a transcription. He died on April 8, 1920 at the age of 35.

Much disagreement surrounds the piano transcription of *Poem*. Because Griffes was too ill to arrange a piano version, most scholars believe that Barrère finished the transcription after Griffes' death (Priore, 1996). The controversy arises from a statement by Marion Bauer concerning Griffes' memorial concert. "The memorial concert opened with the 'Poem for Flute,' played by Nicholas Kouloukis with the composer's piano arrangement played by Walter Golde" (Bauer, 1943). Sources, however, generally agree that Barrère was the arranger of the flute and piano transcription.

Another topic of debate concerning the piano arrangement centers on Barrère's transcription. Since Griffes was unable to create a piano version before his death, Schirmer contacted Barrère for a piano arrangement, assuming that he had access to the original orchestra version. Unbeknownst to Schirmer, the original score had mysteriously vanished, only to reappear 50 years later at an auction in New York City. Whether Barrère created the piano arrangement from memory or another copy of the full score exists is unknown. Nevertheless, multiple discrepancies between the manuscript and Barrère's piano arrangement have been noted. The inconsistencies raise questions regarding the reliability of the piano version. It is perplexing why Barrère made so many errors (Jicha, 2004).

One additional issue regarding *Poem for Flute and Piano* is related to the discrepancies between the published piano and orchestral versions. Both arrangements are similar; however, differences do exist. In fact, according to Priore, over 80

discrepancies exist between Schirmer's flute and piano edition and the orchestral version, which was published in 1951 (Priore, 1996). One possible explanation for the differences was offered by Maurice Sharp, a Barrère student and former principal flutist of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra. He contended that Griffes gave Barrère permission to make changes in the flute score, but that for some reason those alterations were not included in the 1922 piano version (Jicha, 2004).

Knowledge of the historical background of Charles Griffes and his *Poem for Flute and Piano* as well as an understanding of its musical construction is needed by the performer. A brief musical analysis and how it relates to performance will be discussed in the next section.

Musical Analysis and Practice Strategies for *Poem for Flute and Piano*

The following analysis pertains to Georges Barrère's arrangement of *Poem for Flute and Piano* rather than to the orchestral arrangement. Only differences in instrumentation between the piano arrangement and the orchestral arrangement will be listed because of their stylistic implications. In addition, practice strategies and suggestions for the improvement of performers' technical skills will be discussed in conjunction with the analysis.

Although Griffes' *Poem* was created during his last compositional period, hints of his former Oriental and Impressionist styles may be found. The form of the piece is a

quasi-sonata-rondo form (*ABACA*). Its structure is loose and departs from standard musical forms. Each section will be discussed separately in terms of both form and implications for practice.

Section 1 (*A*): The first section of *Poem* is created in a mini sonata form. Griffes states the primary theme (*P*) in *C* sharp natural minor. The use of the piano in octaves adds further emphasis to the theme. It is important to note that the first phrase does not consist of the full theme. The *P* theme in its entirety does not appear until measure 9 within the flute part. This fragment of the *P* theme consists of eight measures, 4+4, and concludes with a perfect authentic cadence in measure 8.

After the hint of the *P* theme in measure 1 of the piano part, the flute enters in measure 9 with the full theme. The *P* theme consists of a three-phrase period, one antecedent phrase and two consequent phrases. Once the *crescendo* has been completed in measures 14 and 15 a quick elision occurs, which leads into the third phrase. The third phrase of the period is an extension, almost like an after-thought, and should diminish dynamically as such.

The *P* theme occurs again in measure 22, but in a slightly altered form. This time it consists of an eight-measure contrasting period. The first phrase is very similar to measure 9, however, the second measure is a variation of the original. It begins with a reiteration of the *C* natural found in measure 22 and modulates to *A* dorian mode via common-tone in measure 30.

The secondary theme (S) first appears in measure 30. This theme follows the model of the traditionally less active S theme typical of sonata forms. Created by an eight measure contrasting period, it peaks in measure 36 after a slight crescendo. Due to the deliberate movement within the antecedent phrase it is common to sound stagnant in this phrase. In order to avoid losing energy the performer should add vibrato along with a slight *crescendo* after each successive *E* in measure 31.

Following the initial S theme statement, a displaced sequence leads into a brief transition period and then a developmental section. The developmental section, beginning on beat three in measure 47, is uncharacteristically back in C sharp minor. Because a modified P theme is used, this phrase will be labeled P1. P1 is accompanied by an open-fifth *ostinato* in the right hand. This *ostinato* quickly descends into another *ostinato* figure four measures later. Such *ostinatos* are common accompaniment motives in this piece.

The next theme to appear in measure 52 loosely relates to the S theme (S1). This section may prove more difficult for less-experienced flutists. Sometimes the reading of quintuplets by intermediate musicians may be daunting. One practice suggestion is to begin by setting the metronome to a dotted-quarter note pulse. Next, think of the quintuplets as being two sixteenth notes combined with a set of triplets. Begin slowly, making sure to subdivide the beats. Once the rhythm feels comfortable, practice

blurring the transition between the sixteenth notes and the triplet notes in order to sound seamless.

Following the more active S1 theme is another variation of P, labeled P2 in measure 62. P2 is an eleven-measure parallel period with an extension on the consequent phrase. The high pitch-level makes this period an exciting ending to the mini-development section. The use of a metronome set for an eighth-note pulse may prove helpful when practicing these phrases, especially in measure 67. In addition, make certain that the peak of the phrase lands on beat one in measure 73, in tandem with the piano before diminishing.

A small reverse recapitulation immediately follows the extended cadence beginning with the original S theme in *A* dorian. From there, a short *tonicization* of *A* major occurs, which provides for a common tone modulation back to *C* sharp minor in measure 83. The mini-sonata form then concludes with the original P theme, as found in the opening phrase of the piece.

Transition : The transition begins with a six-measure, *B* flat pentatonic melody. Although the three-measure phrases vary slightly, they aurally sound like a repeated phrase because of the lack of a half cadence. Following several augmented seconds the flute line is gradually increased in intensity by means of *chromaticism*. Then, in a flurry of notes, the transition section ends in a short cadenza.

This cadenza figure may be one of the most challenging technical aspects of the piece and needs to be practiced slowly. Start by using a metronome set at an eighth note pulse. Use the eighth note pulse until all pitches are even. Once the entire phrase is established, gradually increase the metronome speed until the dotted quarter note is getting the pulse. Play rhythmically until measure 109, and then increase speed until the notes become a trill. A breath may be taken before measure 111; however, place a slight *ritardando* on the trill in measure 110 so as not to sound abrupt. If a breath is taken, begin measure 111 more slowly, and then increase speed.

The building of kinesthetic memory becomes important in such sections, so start slowly and rhythmically. Only after all technical aspects are addressed and fingers remain relaxed may *accelerandos*, *ritardandos*, or *rubato* be added. Memorization may also prove helpful.

Section 2 (B): Section 2 is characterized by a *polyrhythmic* series of jig themes in pseudo-periodic structure using an *ABA* pattern. Beginning via a common-tone modulation on *E* sharp/*F* natural, the first *A* section of the jig may be heard as a sixteen-measure phrase group. The first phrase, 4+4, may be labeled *a*. The following four-measure phrases, which are both consequent in nature, may be labeled *b* and *a1*, respectively. It is also important to note the emergence of polyrhythm in measure 123. Griffes uses this compositional technique several times during the remainder of the piece, which gives "an illusion of nebulousness" (Clarke, 1977, p. 95).

Once the *polyrhythm* becomes evident in measure 123, ensemble performance may become more difficult. Before working with an accompanist, practice the section with a metronome to acquire a solid sense of the beat. If troubles occur when the accompaniment is added, use a metronome.

The B section of the jig begins in measure 131. It consists of 18 measures. The first eight-measure phrase is repeated immediately, thus it cannot be considered to be a true period. After the repeated phrase another short cadenza occurs, followed by the reiteration of the A section's jig theme.

Transition: Following the jig, there is another short transition. This is characterized by *hemiola* in the piano part. The transitional melody first arises in the flute. This melody consists of an eight-measure period, which is smoother and softer. It greatly contrasts with the jig theme. Following this the flute part soon dissolves into a flurry of sixteenth note accompaniment figures and the piano reiterates the melody. The transition section then concludes with a two-note figure (G and A) in the piano, which is imitated by the flute, then rhythmically diminishes into a trill.

Section 3 (A1): The return of the A theme is a variation of P from the mini-sonata section. P is in a rhythmically augmented form, containing quarter notes in 6/8 time. These quarter notes may prove difficult for some students. One way students can perfect their placement is by listening to the piano. Since the piano is also playing triplets, students should be instructed to listen to and follow the accompaniment part.

Section 4 (C): Although only apparent in the orchestral arrangement, Griffes' use of tambourine and snare drum add an Oriental flavor to this duple-meter dance.

Created in an *aab* pattern, the dance begins with a set of repeated phrases followed by two *polymetric* patterns. This same pattern is then immediately transposed up a perfect fourth and repeated again before the section concludes with another cadenza figure.

The performer should gradually slow the trill in measure 255 to a triplet tempo. Then the last two trills may be played as triplets in order to merge with the triplets in measures 256 and 257.

Two pitch relationships of note include the *tritone* relationship between the piano and flute in measure 208 and in the piano part beginning in measure 240.

Section 5 (A): The final A section begins in the same manner as the previous reverse recapitulation. The S theme appears first in A dorian, followed by the P theme in C sharp minor. Unlike the first presentation of the P theme in measure 9, the piano plays the antecedent phrase of the phrase group. Following the antecedent phrase the melody dovetails with the flute part for the two consequent phrases.

After the final statement of the P theme another *tritone* relationship occurs in the bass-line of the piano. The piece then gradually dissolves into an open fifth, thus ending with ambiguous tonality.

A basic understanding of musical structure is important to the performer. It provides an appreciation for a piece as well as assists with ensemble performance and

finger technique. In the case of Griffes' *Poem for Flute and Piano*, ensemble cohesiveness between the flute and piano may be achieved through careful study and musical understanding of the various musical elements. The next section will provide information concerning additional performance aspects such as intonation, embouchure, and *rubato*.

Additional Pedagogical Considerations

After reviewing literature dealing with embouchure and articulation, I found most of the sources described the same methods. A review of related literature produced information concerning flute embouchure and articulation methods, however, many of the sources described the same method. This dearth of information about alternative pedagogical approaches may be due to the fact that professional flutists seldom write method books (Nyfenger, 1986). A review of two of these methods and how they may be employed in the performance of Charles T. Griffes' *Poem for Flute and Piano* will be explored.

Embouchure, Intonation, and Articulation

Traditional Method

The literature concerning flute pedagogy has predominantly dealt with one approach to tonguing and embouchure technique. This first method will be termed the traditional method (TM) for the purpose of this document. The TM has been defined as

an unanchored tonguing technique with a relaxed embouchure. Instructors using this approach teach students to create an embouchure by relaxing the corners of the mouth into a pout formation (Dietz, Kirkbride, Ott, Weiger, &Whittaker, 1998). Pitches are then created by opening a small aperture in the center of the lips and allowing the airstream to enter the flute (Floyd, 2004; Weber, 1969). This action is said to be like forming the words *pure* or *pooh* (Bierschenk, Lautzenheiser, Lavender, Higgins, Menghini, & Rhodes, 2004; Floyd, 2004). Importance is placed on lip flexibility and preventing the corners of the mouth from becoming taut while playing in any register (Dietz, Kirkbride, Ott, Weiger, &Whittaker, 1998; Gearheart, 2011).

Flutists using the traditional method employ two main tongue positions--touching the roof of the mouth or resting halfway between the roof and the floor of the mouth (Chapman, 1973). When tonguing, the tip of the tongue moves quickly upward and strikes the upper palate behind the top teeth (Chapman, 1973; Scott, 1991). This action creates a slight interruption in the airstream. Articulation syllables for the traditional method may vary between *too*, *doo*, *ti*, *ta*, *du*, *te*, *turr*, and *ter*, to name a few (Bierschenk et al., 2004; Toff, 1985). At no time is the tongue allowed to go between the teeth or be anchored in the mouth (Dietz, Kirkbride, Ott, Weiger, &Whittaker, 1998; Rockstrow, 1976; Scott, 1991).

When using the TM, double-tonguing is accomplished by using the syllables *tu-ku*, *teu-ke*, or *deu-geu* (Gearheart, 2011). At no time should the tongue become

anchored. This technique may be used in *Poem* beginning in measure 241, where the articulation should be very light, quick, and effortless. Flutists can practice this section by double-tonguing a chromatic scale. If technique is an issue, tonguing each note twice can alleviate finger coordination issues while still allowing for rehearsal of double-tonguing skills.

In addition, proponents of TM stress maintaining an open throat while playing because the pharynx in an open position creates a full, rich, and dark tone (Dietz, Kirkbride, Ott, Weiger, & Whittaker, 1998). To achieve the desired open throat, performers should vocalize a deep *ah* while lowering the back of the tongue to the floor of the mouth (Floyd, 2004).

Followers of TM such as Paul Taffanel, Philippe Gaubert, Marcel Moyse, Trevor Wye, and Rene Le Roy believe breath support and embouchure flexibility are of utmost importance. Moyse, Taffanel, Gaubert, and Wye have published many useful method books, which focus on teaching this technique (Gaubert & Taffanel, 1997; Moyse, 1958; Wye, 1994). One common aspect these method books share is teaching how intonation and pitch are directly affected by embouchure position (Gearheart, 2011). The primary objective of this concept is being able to maintain a homogenous sound in all registers (Gearheart, 2011). For an example, page seven in Wye's method will be used. Students are instructed to begin with the note *B* because most flutists find success using that pitch. According to Wye, students should practice their *B* until they achieve the "best,

brightest, most beautiful, rich *B* natural [they have] ever played in [their] life," (Wye, 1994, p. 7). Only after locating the "best" tone on *B* may the student move ahead with the exercise.

The lesson can be continued by moving to *A* sharp. Care should be taken to have the student maintain the same tone quality. Adding a visual component such as Wye's use of the colors yellow and purple may assist students achieve the proper timbre in all ranges (Wye, 1994, p. 10 & 17). Later, greater intervals may be used to further kinesthetically train the student to make the proper adjustments in embouchure while changing pitches (Wye, 1994, p. 27-29).

Practicing tone and intonation skills through the use of intervals may also be a helpful tool while learning *Poem*. Since the *A* section of the piece consists of slow, lyrical lines with large intervals and numerous *C* sharps, having good intonation is essential. One specific example of how Wye's interval exercises can be modified to suit the piece is in measure 30. Begin practicing the intervals slowly while maintaining proper intonation. A metronome may be used for the quicker passage in measure 34. The beat should be set for the eighth note so students avoid careless mistakes. Once the center of each pitch is located, along with resolving technical and rhythmical issues, gradually increase the metronome speed.

The TM does work well for many flutists; however, for certain students who do not find success with this method, other options may need to be considered. Although

there is not much literature concerning the tongue-controlled embouchure method, many flutists have explored its possibilities.

Tongue-Controlled Embouchure Method

In contrast to the TM, the tongue-controlled embouchure method (TCE) system relies on support provided by the tongue to create the embouchure (Callet, 1987). This approach has been denounced by many as being unproductive and even harmful to the flute sound (Chapman, 1973; Dietz, Kirkbride, Ott, Weiger, & Whittaker, 1998; Rockstrow, 1976). Rockstrow even went as far as stating, "One of the worst faults that the tongue of the flute player can commit is to rest against the lower front teeth in such a way as to afford a false support for the lip," (Rockstro, 1976, p. 437). Because of much negative publicity, flutists may often overlook TCE as a method.

The TCE appears to be a combination of French style forward tonguing and Jerome Callet's anchor tonguing method (Callet, 1987; Floyd, 2004). In French style tonguing the outer lip formation remains essentially identical to that of the TM; however, the tongue is placed directly behind the embouchure, in between the teeth (Floyd, 2004). This method may have originated from the French language itself (Valette, 2010). Flutist, Geoffrey Gilbert suggested that this minor alteration within the French language, when combined with flute articulation, leads to a cleaner and neater sounding tone (Floyd, 2004). Gilbert further hypothesized that American-style traditional tonguing is based on the spoken language as well; however, minor

differences in consonant production have altered the placement of the tongue within the mouth to being behind the front teeth (Floyd, 2004).

Rampal tongues everything forward and I don't think you will find any Frenchman or French-trained flutist who doesn't. You see, it is in the nature of their language—forward in the mouth and very clearly enunciated. People tend to believe that the production of the letter 'T' is the same in almost any language but I don't think it really is. An English 'T' is produced behind the teeth. In fact, I think there could be a special problem in America in the sense that the spoken language itself is losing its 'Ts' anyway. . . . One often hears 't' replaced by 'd' as in 'liddle' instead of little, 'Adlana' instead of Atlanta, or 'innermission' again with no 't'. . . . (Floyd, 2004, p. 103)

In contrast to the French method, the TCE encourages anchor tonguing (Underwood, 2007). Callet's idea of utilizing the tongue as support for the trumpet embouchure (Callet, 1987) has captured the attention of flutists seeking alternatives to the TM. Immanuel Davis, student of Underwood, described the practical application of using a trumpet-developed embouchure as providing flutists with an artificial sense of resistance, improved pitch accuracy, and a greater sense of breath control (personal communication, May 16, 2009). This technique uses the French idea of forward tonguing, but goes a step farther by allowing the tip of the tongue to remain anchored to the inner bottom lip (Floyd, 2004; Underwood, 2008). In this position the tongue will also rest on the lower front teeth when not actively being utilized (Immanuel Davis, personal communication, May 16, 2009).

This embouchure technique consists of two primary tongue positions which differ from the TM in both resting and tonguing positions. While resting, the tongue is relaxed and anchored which allows it to remain a little arched toward the hard palate, not free-floating in the middle of the mouth. Then, during articulation, the portion of the tongue that is approximately one half-inch posterior to the tip is lifted and lightly touches the hard palate directly behind the teeth. The articulation vowel used for articulation is described as a whispered *duh* by followers of this method (Immanuel Davis, personal communication, May 16, 2009).

In addition, the TCE approach encourages additional techniques to improve intonation, breath control, and articulation accuracy, which are not practiced by followers of the TM. The first strategy is learning to sing while in the act of playing (Davis, 2008). The flutist acquires the benefits of this skill by practicing phrases of music while singing the same pitch, which is sounded. This exercise, when done on a regular basis, is believed to help close one's throat while playing, which contradicts the traditional method's emphasis on maintaining an open pharynx (Underwood, 2007). Such a pedagogic idea was created to provide flutists with a more focused sound and additional breath-control to aid in sound projection in either a group or solo setting (Immanuel Davis, personal communication, May 16, 2009).

Practicing this skill is helpful in all areas, but is especially so within slower tempo phrases. To illustrate, I will use measures 30-33 within *Poem*. Begin by playing

the phrase and internalizing the pitches. Then try singing the phrase without the flute. Keeping the tongue anchored and using a traditional tonguing syllable may make the transition to the flute easier. Next, add the flute and notice the position of the throat muscles. Practice the phrase a few times while singing before removing the vocal aspect in order to kinesthetically remember the throat muscle position. Once the flute is removed maintain the throat muscles in the more closed position. Through this method the flute sound should be more focused and the amount of breath-control will be improved.

Another skill to which much attention has been given is throat-sound tonguing (Immanuel Davis, personal communication, May 16, 2009). Throat-sound tonguing is best described as the uttering of an almost inaudible grunt, not unlike when attempting to clear one's throat. This idea, used in place of tonguing, is supposed to provide the flutist with a reference sound (Underwood, 2007). A reference sound is defined as the ideal flute tone which one is to strive to achieve while using the tongue to articulate (Immanuel Davis, personal communication, May 16, 2009). Beginning flutists who study the TCE learn how to articulate by using throat sounds before being taught to tongue (Immanuel Davis, personal communication, May 16, 2009). Teaching in this manner helps provide students with an aural representation of an unimpeded sound before the addition of the tongue (Immanuel Davis, personal communication, May 16, 2009).

Using the throat-sound tonguing is helpful in all sections of *Poem*. One example would be in measure 208. Often students will over-compensate with their tongue movements while playing staccato. The resulting sound thus tends to be heavy and, for lack of a better term, tongue-laden. In order to alleviate such deficiencies within breath-support and tonguing try locating a proper reference sound through throat tonguing first. Begin practicing the passages slowly and focusing on the space in between the notes being created without the need for excess tongue movement. Once the desired lightness is achieved, add the tongue and remove the throat sound. The resulting staccato notes while tonguing should sound identical to the throat sound. Audio-recording this process may prove helpful.

The final facet of TCE is *spit-buzzing*. Spit-buzzing is taught in order to produce a greater sense of resistance within the mouth, which otherwise does not exist while playing the flute (Immanuel Davis, personal communication, May 16, 2009).

Underwood explained that creating more resistance between one's mouth and the flute provides additional embouchure control, pitch control, and breath-control (Underwood, 2007). Spit-buzzing is achieved in a manner not unlike buzzing into a brass instrument, however, the corners of the mouth are never allowed to be pulled back. It is carried out "without the mouthpiece..." and "combines the tongue striking the compressed lips, with full air..." creating a buzzing sound (Callet, 1987, pg. 8).

One way to use spit-buzzing in *Poem* is by buzzing the phrases. Consider measures 30-33 again. Begin by playing the phrase while internalizing the pitches. Next, remove the flute and go back to spit-buzz the phrase, all while focusing on the pitches and kinesthetically feeling the muscles working within the embouchure. Finally, without changing embouchure muscles, place the flute back on the chin and replay the phrase. The resulting sound will be more focused and in-tune.

Rubato

During the process of learning the technical aspects of *Poem* one of the most essential musical processes, *rubato*, must not be overlooked. *Rubato* may be described as a slight rhythmic variation from the written musical notation. With the manipulation and displacement of time, *rubato* allows the performer to use his experience and musical imagination to make the music more expressive and more meaningful. Because printed music only provides a rough outline of a composer's musical conceptualization, musicians need to add *rubato* in order to achieve musical expression. The teaching and learning of *rubato* can be a difficult concept. If too much *rubato* is used the music may sound unrhythmical; conversely, if not enough *rubato* is used the music may sound sterile and devoid of emotion. In the following section some helpful strategies that stem from Jaques-Dalcroze's work with Eurhythmics will be discussed.

Eurhythmics, derived from the Greek language meaning "good rhythm," is a method of teaching music in which the human body is considered to be the primary

instrument. One researcher, Lorraine Manifold (2008), described the correlation between the mind and body as follows:

When the body is considered as the main instrument and that movement to music increases students' understanding of what the music is expressing, it is an empowering experience which, when applied to learning every piece of music, increases our decisions about how to convey the emotions in performance. (Manifold, 2008, p. 27)

The connection between music and movement, the core concept of Jaques-Dalcroze's Eurhythmics, can be a powerful and effective tool when teaching or learning any piece of music. Additional key concepts of Eurhythmics include focusing attention, relaxing muscles, and learning how to react to musical changes without responding with muscle tension. Performing some Dalcroze-inspired movement ideas while listening to *Poem* may enhance musical performance.

In order to do Eurhythmics effectively some basics must be learned. These fundamentals may be learned in a classroom setting or individually via method books such as *The Rhythm Inside: Connecting Body, Mind, and Spirit Through Music* by Schnebly-Black and Moore (2003). This book begins with a mindfulness activity designed to increase students' awareness of the physical body. As lessons progress, short musical ideas along with appropriate gestures are provided by the teacher in order to lead students to move appropriately to short phrases and eventually to full musical excerpts.

Once some fundamentals of Eurhythmics have been learned they may be applied to *Poem*. Listening to the piece numerous times is essential in order for students to

internalize the music. Next, discussing the quality of the piece using emotional and visual ideas may assist students to create physical movements. Starting with just one phrase of the music initially may prove beneficial. The following ideas were derived from *Exercise 2* on pages 120-121 in Schnebly-Black and Moore's book.

Exercise 2 begins by describing a system of gestures created by Rudolph Laban to physically experience music. There are two primary movements within this system: thrusting and floating. All other movements are derived from the primary movements by altering them in terms of weight, time, and space. The terms weight, time, and space refer to movement qualities. In musical terms weight equals the dynamic level of a pitch, time coincides with the length of a pitch, and space corresponds to the amount of *rubato* used within a given rhythm. Such movements may be used while listening to *Poem* to gain a heightened physical sensation of phrasing and *rubato*. The following are descriptions of several of these movements and how they may be used within measures 240-258.

The first movement, thrust, is described as moving one leg from a bent position to a straight position. This movement is sudden, firm, and direct and may be used to indicate accented and weighty phrases. Thrust may be used in measures 240 and 242 by alternating legs on each beat to indicate the piano's strong eighth notes.

Following the thrust movements, the dab movement may be used. Dabbing movements are designed to give a kinesthetic sensation of light, direct, and urgent

music. Schnebly-Black and Moore illustrate its usage through the metaphor of "dabbing sunscreen on yourself," (Schnebly-Black and Moore, 2003, p. 201). Dabbing may be applied during the accelerating sixteenth notes in measures 241 and 243-248. Not all fingers should be dabbed in unison; otherwise the sense of musical urgency may be lost.

Once the music dissolves into a flurry of trills in measures 248-255, the wringing movement may be employed. Wringing is described as using "both hands to wring out a wet cloth," (Schnebly-Black and Moore, 2003, p. 201). This movement is both flexible and firm. Start by wringing hands very tightly; wringing one hand around an opposing thumb may be helpful. As the trill loses its urgency gradually loosen hands and slow the wringing actions. Then, during the last two trills in measure 255 change to a float movement. The floating movement is portrayed as "letting both arms float like seaweed on the waves," (Schnebly-Black and Moore, 2003, p. 201). In addition to doing the wringing and floating movements, to show decreasing dynamics lower into a crouch position very slowly until reaching the downbeat of measure 258.

Rubato may be an easily improved skill when physical activities inspired by Dalcroze and Laban are employed.

Conclusions and Final Remarks

Charles Griffes was an American composer who, during his relatively short life, produced 140 pieces (Anderson, 1993). Today, some of his works are considered to be part of the standard repertoire. His earlier works exhibited Germanic qualities. In his second period (1911-1917) his interest in Impressionism and Oriental influences became a dominant theme. In his third period he broke away from European tradition by using innovative compositional techniques. One piece, composed during his final compositional period, was *Poem for Flute and Piano*. This piece is a work that requires great musical understanding and a mastery of technique to be performed well. Double-tonguing, pitch control, and *rubato* are all skills that may improve during the preparation of *Poem* for performance. Effective practice and the learning of advanced flute techniques may result in a very satisfying performance.

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